



Create A City: An Urban Planning Exercise

Students learn the process of planning a community, while reinforcing their writing and speaking skills.

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Grade Level	6-8
Duration	3 class periods

National Geography Standards

ELEMENT FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

Arizona Social Studies Standard

Grade 6

Strand 4 Geography

Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms

PO 1 Construct maps, charts, and graphs to display geographic information.

Concept 6 Geographic Applications

PO 2 Use geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., recognizing patterns, mapping, graphing) when discussing current events.

Grade 7

Strand 4 Geography

Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms

PO 1 Construct maps, charts, and graphs to display geographic information.

Concept 4 Human Systems

PO 5 Analyze the effects (e.g. quality of life, transportation, population density) of settlement on places.

Concept 6 Geographic Applications

PO 3 Use geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., recognizing patterns, mapping, graphing) when discussing current events.

Grade 8

Strand 4 Geography

Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms

PO 1 Construct maps, charts, and graphs to display geographic information.

Concept 6 Geographic Applications

PO 2 Describe ways different groups of people (i.e., Native Americans, Hispanics, retirees) create and shape the same environment.

PO 3 Use geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., recognizing patterns,

Arizona Language Arts Standards

WRITING STANDARD

Grade 6, 7, and 8

Strand 1 Writing Process

Concept 1 Prewriting

PO 1 Generate ideas through a variety of activities(e.g. prior knowledge, discussion with others, printed material or other sources)

PO 3 Determine the intended audience of a writing piece

Concept 5 Publishing

PO 1 Prepare writing in a format (e.g. oral presentation, manuscript, multimedia) appropriate to audience and purpose

Strand 2 Writing Applications

Concept 3 Functional

PO 1 Write a variety of functional texts (e.g. directions, recipes, procedures, rubrics, labels, poster, graphs/tables)

Strand 3 Writing Elements

Concept 1 ideas and Content

PO 1 Use clear, focused ideas and details to support the topic.

PO 2 Provide content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.

PO 3 Develop a sufficient explanation or exploration of the topic.

PO 4 Include ideas and details that show original perspective.

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mapping, graphing) when discussing current events

Overview

Arizona will continue to grow. According to the last census, the population increased from 3,665,228 people in April of 1990 to 5,130,632 people in April of 2000. This is a 40 percent change in our population. Even though it is inevitable that growth will occur, growth does not always occur in a planned manner. Therefore, it is the concern of informed citizens that our future growth be planned in a manner that helps humans, preserves the environment, and maintains a quality of life for all.

Purpose

This activity will have students work in cooperative groups to design an ideal city—one which is convenient for humans, preserves the environment, and maintains a quality of life for both animals and humans. Students will not only design a city, but they will write an explanation of how geography was used to improve the quality of life in the planning of an environment.

Materials

- White or colored construction paper
- Glue sticks
- Create a City worksheet
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- Rulers
- Scissors
- Six Trait Rubric for Writing

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- create a model of a city using their knowledge of geography skills, especially their knowledge of Human Environment/Interaction.
- write a formal communication in an appropriate format for a specific audience and purpose as well as express their ideas in a clear and direct way.
- practice cooperative learning skills.

Procedures

If time is an issue, the lesson can be shortened by deciding the name of the city, where the city is located, and what the urban planning company will be called instead of having the students decide these aspects.

SESSION ONE

1. Introduce this lesson by using the census figures from the overview to discuss Arizona's growth. Then have students cite problems with growth (lack of water, animals being pushed off the land, more pollution, more services needed, more crime, more roads, etc.). Next, have students cite the positive aspects of growth (more diversity of peoples, more opportunities for jobs, more money, more tourism, more amusements, more tax dollars.) Record these on an overhead or chalkboard in two columns: Problems with Growth and Positive Aspects of Growth.

2. Look through the list and pick out a few of the entries. Have the students comment on how geographers could help with the process. (I. e., limit the sprawl, make the growth more attractive by leaving untouched areas, helping plan for city services, such as where to put power lines and roads, helping to find more water sources, etc.

3. Explain the model and writing prompt:
Writing Prompt: *You are a geographer with exceptional skills as an urban planner. You wish to be hired by the new town council of _____ (students will need to make up a name) which will be hiring urban planners to create a city near _____ (students will need to pick an Arizona location). The town council has determined that the city of _____ will have all of the features included on the Create a City diagram sheet. In order for you to get this job which will pay very well, you need to persuade the town council that you have the best ideas for the new city. Now, since this job is so important to you and many ideas are valued, you will be in a planning team of 2 people. Say to the students, "So this task will be done by you and a partner. As a team, you have this great chance at planning a city and creating a company of your own. Be sure to name your company.*

The first task for you and your partner will be to create a paper model of the city. Therefore, you will need to create a town plan. Use the Create a

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City diagram sheet and cut out the facilities listed on it (that were selected by the town council) and glue them on construction paper to create a model of your city. Be sure to think through where you are planning to place each facility. You must use your skills as a geographer to make sure this is the best plan. The goal is to design an ideal city--one which is convenient for humans, preserves the environment, and maintains a quality of life for both animals and humans."

"After you have selected your company name and your model is completed, you and your partner will write a speech that could be presented to the town council. The focus of this speech is to persuade them to hire your company based on your placement of facilities and your reasons why this is the best location for each. This speech must be clear and concise. This means all ideas need to be said in less than 2 pages. Remember that you are competing with other companies for this job. You must convince them that you have the best ideas for the new city."

"You will be judged on the neatness of your model, so use color and work carefully. Your written speech will be judged on completeness of information. Your written speech will be judged on the appropriate format for a speech to a town council as well as are your ideas expressed clearly."

Students should have time to begin cutting and pasting on this first session.

Hint: Some students want to add additional facilities from the ones given on the Create a City Worksheet. You can permit this, but limiting them to the white spaces leftover on the worksheet saves paper and will limit their ideas so the city becomes "do-able" in 2 class periods.

SESSION TWO

Students will continue to cut and paste on their paper model while discussing the placement of facilities and perhaps keeping track of their logic by taking some notes.

Students should begin their rough draft for speech to the town council explaining why the facilities would be best in their selected location.

SESSION THREE

Students will finalize their one to two page speech to the Town Council. If time permits, have some

teams present their models and speeches to the class.

Assessment

Writing: The written speech can be graded for voice and ideas: Is this an appropriate speech to be given in front of a town council. Are the ideas organized and clearly stated. Mastery will be considered a "4" on the six traits rubric.

Geography: The written speech can be graded for an analysis of geographic skills used. Does the team mention all 5 of these ideas? 1. Why city services (government offices, school, library, landfill, jail, fire and police departments, and prison) were placed in certain areas? 2. Why businesses (office complex, industrial park, cute shops, strip malls, and shopping center) were located in certain areas? 3. Why recreation (golf course, parks, and arts complex) facilities were located in certain areas? 4. Why housing (homes and apartments) were located in certain areas? 5. Why roads (freeways) were placed in certain areas?

Deduct 20% for each missing concept (city services, businesses, recreation, housing, and roads.) Mastery will be considered 80%. Neatness and grammar can also be considered.

Extensions

Students could be required to present their speeches to the class. The class could list strengths and weaknesses they found in common between the different proposed city plans.

To strengthen their reading skills, students could read newspaper articles on the expansion of cities and the concept of community planning. Then decide whether the author is for or against the proposed plans.